

PARR-RICHMOND TERMINAL COMPANY

SDMS # 88206309

No. 1 Drumm Street
San Francisco
Zone 11

July 21, 1948

Colonel S. N. Karrick
Department of the Army
Corps of Engineers
Office of the District Engineer
74 New Montgomery Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

The Parr-Richmond Terminal Company herein submits its request that the United States Army Engineers give favorable attention to the matter of certain additional improvements and modifications of the existing project in the Inner Harbor of the Port of Richmond.

The Parr-Richmond Terminal Company under agreement with the City of Richmond is charged with the responsibility of operating all of the general cargo wharves in the Port of Richmond. This agreement has been in force for 22 years, and during this period the general cargo wharves of the Port have expanded considerably with particular attention being given to the expansion of facilities on the Inner Harbor.

The Inner Harbor facilities of the Port consist generally of:

- A. Terminal No. 1. - a wharf facility of 151,610 square feet and 557 feet in length constructed entirely of reinforced concrete and used principally as a loading point for packaged petroleum moving in the Trans-Pacific trade. During the past twelve months 147,664.72 tons of cargo have passed over this facility.
- B. Terminal No. 2. - a wharf of 47,782 square feet in area over which has passed during the past twelve months 179,326.36 tons of cargo.
- C. Terminal No. 3. - a modern reinforced concrete facility consisting of 120,000 square feet covered space and 492,450 square feet open storage area. During the past twelve months 181,987.69 tons of cargo have passed over this facility.

Terminal No. 3 is primarily concerned with vessels moving in the so-called TransPacific trade; that is, a trade serving the ports of Asia, the Pacific Islands, Australia, South Africa and India. On the outbound movement packaged petroleum products are the principal commodity shipped with general merchandise being used for topping cargo. Virtually one-hundred percent of all the vessels moving in the aforementioned TransPacific trade

carry packaged petroleum products as a bottom or base cargo. A majority of the ships clearing the San Francisco harbor for these ports have picked up all or a portion of their cargo at the Port of Richmond.

Vessels moving in this trade consist primarily of foreign owned and operated ships with American flag vessels moving in somewhat lesser movements. The foreign flag vessels are generally speaking large ships constructed principally for the long voyage which this trade demands; and, therefore, their draft is correspondingly greater than vessels of the coastwise or inter-coastal type. It has been the experience of the Port that these large vessels are apprehensive of entering or departing from the Inner Harbor of Richmond when fully loaded because of the scant draft existing. On a number of occasions vessels have literally plowed their way in or out of the harbor due to the present inadequate depth of the present channel project. It has been the experience of the company's management that inevitably masters of these foreign vessels complain of the shallow depth, and it has been only with great difficulty that the company has retained these vessels on its published sailing schedules. The problem of inadequate channel depth is the greatest barrier to harbor business that this company faces.

The wartime shipbuilding program of the United States Government has changed the character of American flag vessels calling at the Inner Harbor terminal facilities at the Port of Richmond. Prior to the war, American flag vessels were relatively small, many of them having been constructed during the shipbuilding program of World War I. These vessels were characterized by their short length and shallow draft; thus, the existing channel project was at this time adequate for these vessels. However, the C-4 type vessel is encountering difficulty in negotiating the present channel, and Victory-type ships, when fully loaded to capacity, are continually striking mud with their propellers. It has been our experience that Liberty ships, when fully loaded, also encounter inadequate channel depths.

On inbound TransPacific movements, it has been the experience of this Company that copra, which is the principal inbound commodity, is often stowed directly under the main decks as topping cargo, and that, therefore, ships bringing in this commodity must enter the Port with a full burden of cargo. As these are the same types of vessels which move in the outbound trade, they experience the same difficulties with the present inadequate channel project, and the office of this company is in constant receipt of inquiries regarding channel depths and tide conditions in order that these vessels may negotiate the channel into the Inner Harbor with the least risk. Parenthetically, it may be stated that without exception, vessel owners, agents and ship masters are unreserving in their enthusiasm of the Inner Harbor as a sheltered berthing area and are universal in their condemnation of the channel therein.

Regarding the entrance channel to the Inner Harbor project, this company respectfully requests that favorable attention be given to the widening

of the existing channel from four hundred feet (400') to six hundred feet (600') as well as the deepening to thirty-five feet (35') from the present inadequate thirty feet (30'). This channel affords the only practical approach to the entire Inner Harbor area. The boundaries of this channel are marked by buoys which generally indicate the access route. Vessels entering the harbor run constant risk of grounding, and it has been the experience of this company that approximately one vessel per month does ground, when entering or departing and occasionally require tug assistance. These frequent groundings are adequate proof that the channel is not sufficiently wide.

In addition to the Inner Harbor port facilities enumerated above, this company is at the moment opening a new general cargo facility known as the Richmond Heavy Lift and Bulk Cargo Terminal. This wharf facility lies at the head of the Inner Harbor at the junction of the Santa Fe Channel and Lauritzen Canal. Here is a wharf twenty-two hundred feet (2200') in length which can be made serviceable in the accommodation of deep sea steamers and in the handling of bulk and heavy lift cargoes. Some seventeen hundred feet (1700') of this wharf structure lies on the Lauritzen Canal, and the balance fronts on the Santa Fe Channel. It is through this bulk cargo and heavy lift terminal that a new and highly-demanded service is being offered to shippers and water carriers. Here, six giant heavy lift cranes will be stationed where for the first time on San Francisco Bay heavy lift cargoes can be handled direct between ship and shore without the intervention of floating hoisting equipment.

Our calculations demonstrate that shippers and carriers will effect a saving in excess of fifty percent when heavy lift cargoes are handled through this facility. In addition to the heavy lift feature, this terminal will be the only point on San Francisco Bay, except for the grain terminal at Islais Creek, where heavy moving bulk commodities can be stockpiled at ship-side within reach of cargo handling cranes. This affords an enormous savings to shippers due to the fact that not only are loading costs lower, but rail cars are unloaded immediately upon their arrival at the terminal and released, instead of being held as storage units awaiting transfer of the material to the ship as is done in the case of conventional bulk handling equipment.

It may be said that almost without exception vessels handling these heavy bulk commodities load to maximum draft. The inclusion of the Lauritzen Canal as part of the present harbor project together with the deepening of the project will open these enormous facilities to the economic benefit of shippers and water carriers alike. The least width in the Lauritzen Canal to make this operation safe and practicable is a channel two-hundred and fifty feet (250') wide between wharf fronts three hundred feet (300') apart.

It is further contemplated to expand the bulk cargo and heavy lift terminal by projecting the existing apron wharf on the Santa Fe Channel southeasterly

Colonel S. N. Karrick

Page 4

July 21, 1948

across the upper end of the main Inner Harbor area. This expansion program will entail a change in the harbor lines and will offer a site for a large quantity of the dredge material which will be removed from the harbor during the deepening process.

The aforementioned harbor improvements will materially reduce existing harbor hazards and will assist in the development of commerce and industry within the Port of Richmond. Your favorable attention to this request is solicited.

Very truly yours,

PARR-RICHMOND TERMINAL COMPANY

JPC/kh

By FRED D. PARR
President